



# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

December 2018

## Whistle Blowing Policy

At The Academy of Woodlands, we believe that all Staff\* must acknowledge their individual responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of Senior Management and/or relevant agencies. Although this can be difficult this is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

You may be the first to recognise that something is wrong but may not feel able to express your concerns out of a feeling that this would be disloyal to colleagues or you may fear harassment or victimisation. These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or young person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember it is often the most vulnerable children or young people who are targeted. These children need someone like you to safeguard their welfare. (Refer to the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Policy)

\*Staff includes any adult, paid or voluntary working within The Academy.

***Don't think 'what if I'm wrong?' – think 'what if I'm right?'***

### **Reasons for whistle blowing**

- Each individual has a responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour
- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risks to others
- To prevent becoming implicated yourself

### **What stops people from whistle blowing**

- Starting a chain of events which spirals
- Disrupting the work or project
- Fear of getting it wrong
- Fear of repercussions or damaging careers
- Fear of not being believed

### **How to raise a concern**

(Please also refer to the Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy).

You should voice your concerns, suspicions or uneasiness as soon as you feel you can. The earlier a concern is expressed the easier and sooner action can be taken. If you have concerns about any adult who works with children, you should contact the Lead Designated Child Protection Officer, Mr Fiddaman who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Clare Wilkes, telephone number: 01634 334466, so the details are logged accurately.

- Try to pinpoint exactly what practice is concerning you and why.
- Approach your immediate Manager, Head teacher, or the Designated Child Protection Officer or their Deputy Appointed Person.
- If the concerns involve the appointed Lead Designated Child Protection Officer, the Head teacher, report your concerns to the Designated Child Protection Officer the Senior Day-Care Provision Manager, the Children and Families Services Manager, or the Deputy Designated Child Protection Officer. If they are unavailable report your concerns directly to the local authority Customer First Line.
- You may call the LADO direct if it is an emergency on 01634 331229. In the event of an emergency occurring outside normal office hours (Monday - Thursday, 8.30am–5.15pm, Friday 8.30am-4.45pm) use the 24-hour emergency number 0845 7626777.

- Make sure you get a satisfactory response – don't let matters rest.
- Ideally, you should put your concerns in writing, outlining the background and history, giving names, dates and places where you can.
- A member of staff is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation but will need demonstrate sufficient grounds for the concern.

#### **What happens next?**

- You should be given information on the nature and progress of any enquiries.
- Your employer has a responsibility to protect you from harassment or victimisation.
- No action will be taken against you if the concern proves to be unfounded and was raised in good faith.
- Malicious allegations may be considered as a disciplinary offence.

#### **Self-Reporting**

There may be occasions where a member of staff has a personal difficulty, perhaps a physical or mental health problem, which they know to be impinging on their professional competence. At The Academy of Woodlands we believe that Staff have a responsibility to discuss such a situation with their line manager so that professional and personal support can be offered to the member of staff concerned. Whilst such reporting will remain confidential in most instances, this cannot be guaranteed where personal difficulties raise concerns about the welfare or safety of children.

Policy updated: December 2018

Head Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

The Academy of Woodlands Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy to be updated in line with new legislation.